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# CONSTRUCTIVE STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

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## PART V — (*continued*)

### FIRST PERIOD OF THE GALILEAN MINISTRY.

FROM THE RETURN TO GALILEE UNTIL THE CHOOSING OF THE TWELVE.

#### CHAPTER X.

##### HOSTILITY OF THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES TO JESUS.

§ 41. The paralytic borne of four.

Matt. 9 : [1] 2-8. Mark 2 : 1-12. Luke 5 : 17-26.

§ 42. The call of Matthew.

Matt. 9 : 9-13. Mark 2 : 13-17. Luke 5 : 27-32.

§ 43. The question about fasting.

Matt. 9 : 14-17. Mark 2 : 18-22. Luke 5 : 33-39.

§ 44. The infirm man at the pool of Bethesda.

John, chap. 5

§ 45. The disciples plucking grain.

Matt. 12 : 1-8. Mark 2 : 23-28. Luke 6 : 1-5.

§ 46. The man with the withered hand.

Matt. 12 : 9-14. Mark 3 : 1-6. Luke 6 : 6-11.

¶ 107. Notes on § 41, Mark 2 : 1-12. — Vss. 1, 2, "Capernaum" : *cf.* ¶ 98. "House": The houses of the poorer people in Palestine were (and still are) of but one story, and built of a mixture of straw and mud plastered over a framework of posts and wickerwork. The walls and roof were a foot or more thick, but, as they were not very hard, they were easily damaged by heavy rains, and could be dug through without difficulty (see Matt. 6 : 20). The roof was flat and reached by a flight of stairs running from the street, and not from the court upon which most houses opened. Jesus was probably standing in the very wide door of the house, and the crowd had filled the house and courtyard, thus shutting off all approach to him. Vs. 3, "sick of the palsy" : better, "paralyzed." "Borne of four" : The paralytic was lying on his pallet ("bed"), and one of his friends was at each of its four corners. Vs. 4, "uncovered the roof," etc. : they reached the flat roof by the outside stairway and easily dug through it between the rafters. When

the opening was made, they passed the paralytic down to those who stood about Jesus within the room below. Vs. 5, "their faith": *i. e.*, of the five men. It consisted at the least in a confidence that Jesus could heal the sick man, and was evinced by the energy by which they overcame the obstacles in the way to Jesus. "Sins are forgiven thee": not merely the injuries done men, but the breakings of the divine law, *i. e.*, wrongs done against God, are forgiven. Jesus must have seen, therefore, something more in the man than the mere desire to be healed, for to forgive sins is to free one from penalty and to restore one to friendship with God. A mere desire to be cured would have been satisfied by a cure. Evidently the man was repentant as well as ill, and perhaps saw in his illness a punishment for his sin. Vs. 6, "scribes": professional teachers and expounders of the law, and the originators of the "oral law" to which Jesus was so opposed. This is the first time in which Jesus has encountered them. It is to be noted that the beginning of their opposition concerns the authority of Jesus as over against their own opinions. Vs. 7, "blasphemeth": speaks or acts in a way derogatory to God. They believed that the authority to pronounce forgiveness of sins was wholly limited to God. Jesus proceeds to prove that it is his as well. Bruce remarks (*Expositor's Greek Testament*, I, 351) that the scribes read the blasphemy into the words of Jesus. (Compare John 20 : 23, where a similar authority is extended to the apostles.) Vss. 9, 10. The argument of Jesus is this: "My authority to say, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee,' can be established by my ability to heal; one form of words is as easy to say and as effective as the other." Of course, such an argument as this could be conclusive only when sustained by the speaker's own righteousness.

¶ 108. **Notes on § 42, Mark 2 : 13-17.**—Vs. 13, "sea side": There are two beaches near Khan Minyeh which would be suitable for a meeting place of crowds. Vs. 14, "sitting at the place of toll": A large portion of the income of Herod Antipas must have come from customs. The privilege of collecting these customs was sold to contractors, who in turn sold to different persons the right to collect them in specific places. As the men who actually did the collecting kept all in excess of what they paid for the contract, they were certain to be extortionate. This fact, as well as that they represented an obnoxious government, made the publicans despised and hated. Levi, or Matthew (Matt. 9 : 9) as he is also called, was one of these smaller publicans, and probably collected customs levied upon the fish and other food brought to Capernaum from the lake and surrounding country.

It was he who wrote in Aramaic the collection of sayings of Jesus which constitutes so important a part of the gospel that bears his name. *Cf.* ¶ 11. Vs. 15. It is noteworthy that Matthew celebrates his renunciation of a hated occupation and the beginning of his discipleship to Jesus by a feast. Vs. 16, "scribes of the Pharisees": *i. e.*, those teachers of the law who were members of the society of Pharisees. They judged it a chief duty of religious teachers to keep away from sinful people. Vs. 17. The words of Jesus contain no little irony, but they also give a key to the earnestness of his life. He helped those who felt the need of help, and he associated with evil people only that he might show them the way to righteousness. The word "righteous" may either be ironical, meaning "self-righteous," or may denote a merely ideal class of truly righteous men.

¶ 109. **Notes on § 43, Mark 2 : 18-22.**—Vs. 18, "John's disciples": John was already in prison at this time (Mark 1 : 14), but his disciples still had communication with him (Matt. 11 : 2 ; Luke 7 : 18). By the "disciples of the Pharisees" is probably meant those who followed Pharisaic teaching, though not strictly members of the society. "Fasting": The law of Moses made compulsory only one fast, the Day of Atonement (Lev., chap. 16 ; 23 : 26-32). The Pharisees, however, from their inevitable sense of failure to obey the numerous rules they derived from the law, were led to fast twice every week, on Mondays and Thursdays. "They come," etc.: The question was not only natural, but implies that the Pharisees had not yet become hostile to Jesus. Vs. 19, "sons of the bride-chamber": those special friends of the bridegroom whose office it was, according to Jewish custom, to see that the wedding passed off with hilarity. Naturally they did not fast. Jesus does not forbid fasting, nor does he command it. He simply teaches that, if it is to be practiced, it should correspond to a person's inner experiences. In this illustration the bridegroom represents Jesus, and his friends, the disciples. Vs. 20. Jesus here shows clearly that thus early in his public work he anticipated death. And he well might. Did he not have before him always the experience of the prophets (Matt. 5 : 12 ; 23 : 37) and of John the Baptist? Vss. 21, 22. Two illustrations, drawn from the daily life of the people, show why Jesus instituted a new fraternity instead of merely reforming Judaism. As unshrunk cloth, if sewed on to an old garment, soon shrinks and makes new rents, and as old goatskins were not strong enough to hold new and still fermenting wine, so would the old institutions suffer if the new teaching attempted to reform them. "New wineskins," etc.:

The inference is that Jesus expected that his followers would devise such forms and organization as they might need.

¶110. Notes on § 44, John, chap. 5.—Vs. 1, “a feast of the Jews”: what feast this was has been much discussed, but without reaching any well-established conclusion. Vs. 2, “a pool . . . having five porches”: see ¶111. Vs. 7, “I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool”: The pool was probably fed by an intermittent spring, and to the irregularly recurrent inflow the people had attributed a peculiar healing power. The explanation of the cause of the motion of the water found in vs. 4, but omitted from the Revised Version, was probably added to the text by some early copyist. It is not contained in the oldest manuscripts.

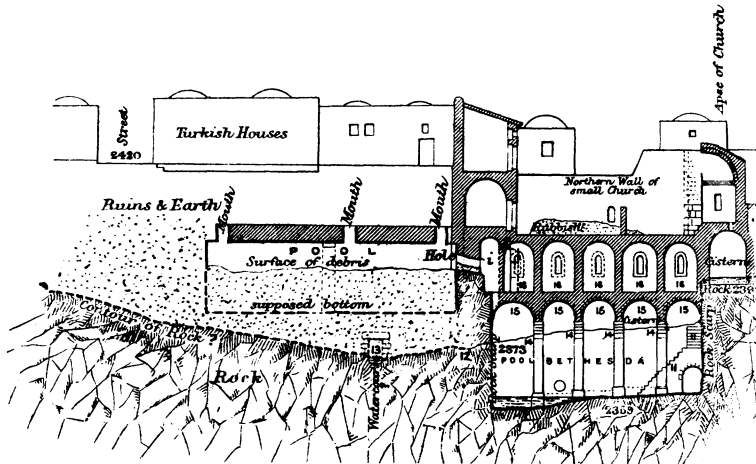
Vs. 10, “it is not lawful,” etc.: Carrying a burden, however small, was one of the things which Pharisaic teaching expressly forbade on the sabbath. See Jer. 17:21; Neh. 13:15-21. Vs. 14, “Sin no more, lest a worse thing befall thee”: cease to sin, lest something worse than a physical infirmity come upon thee. The language perhaps suggests, but does not affirm, that his infirmity had been caused by his sin. What Jesus wishes in any case to save him from is a worse than physical ill. Vs. 15, “told the Jews that it was Jesus”: probably not with the intention, yet with the result, of turning the hostility of the Jews against Jesus. Vs. 17, “my Father worketh even until now, and I work”: To the Jews’ literal and strict interpretation of the sabbath law, which converted the day into one of inactivity, relieved only by hypocritical evasions, Jesus replies that God, his Father, never interrupts his beneficent activity, hence that activity on this day cannot be itself wrong; and that that which he is doing cannot be wrong since he is working in harmony with his Father. The argument does not prove that man does not need a sabbath for rest, but that the sabbath is not intended to be a day of total inactivity. He who works in harmony with God need never cease his work because of the sacred devotion of certain hours of the week to inactivity.

Vs. 18, “called God his own Father”: not so much in the words he had used, though the expression “my Father,” which Jesus used here and often, was one to which the Jews were not accustomed, as in the implication that he was so at one with God that he knew his thought, and what God did he could do. “Making himself equal with God”: of equal authority with God, no more than he subject to the law.

The new question raised in vs. 18, Jesus’ relation to God, becomes the subject of the discourse beginning in vs. 19, and the sabbath

question drops out of consideration. In vss. 19-29 Jesus emphasizes the thought already expressed in vs. 17, viz., that he acts constantly and only in accordance with the will of his Father, not as if he were a second and independent God equal with God (the Jews' idea, see vs. 18), but the manifestation in human life of the one God (see John 14:10).

Vss. 30-47 speak of the evidence that Jesus is really what he says he is, the Son, revealer, and representative of God. His claim



THE POOL OF BETHESDA, as identified by C. SCHICK  
[From the *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement*, 1888]  
The fresco of the angel is at X, a little to the right and above i

does not rest merely on his own assertion (vs. 31), but upon the Father's power working in and through him (vs. 36), John's witness, and the Scriptures' witness, to which the Jews are blind, because they have come to them in a wrong way.

In chap. 7:15-24 the controversy here begun is carried forward (see especially vss. 21, 23). There again Jesus maintains that it is not himself but God whom they are rejecting, and this because of the blindness which their selfish ambition causes. Then, returning for a moment to the violation of the sabbath which they charged against him, he points out that they themselves admit that some kinds of work can be done on the sabbath, and urges them to judge righteously, not superficially.

¶ 111. **The Pool of Bethesda.**—(a) The site favored by tradition since the fourteenth century is the so-called Birket Israel, just north of the temple area. It is over 50 feet deep, 131 feet wide, and 365 feet long from east to

west; its length continued, however, by an extension 142 feet long by 45 feet wide. Its depth seems to exclude it from consideration as the place spoken of by John, and it is probably not as old as the first century. (b) Robinson suggested, without advocating it, the Fountain of the Virgin outside the city wall on the east side (*Biblical Researches*, I, pp. 337-43), and Conder approves the suggestion (HASTINGS, *Dict. Bib.*, art. "Bethesda"). The chief argument for it is that it is an intermittent spring. (c) The Twin Pools at the northeastern corner of the Fortress of Antonia. Here are two pools cut in the rock, side by side, with a partition five feet wide between them, and a never-failing water supply (WILSON, *Recovery of Jerusalem*, p. 198). (d) In 1888 Schick discovered about 350 feet north and west of the Birket Israel (100 feet west of the church of St. Anne), beneath the ruins of a small church, further ruins of what was evidently once a series of five arched chambers, constituting a still older church. Beneath these ruins, and reached by a stone staircase, is a pool the water of which is said to vary intermittently in depth. On the walls of the older church is a fresco (to the right of *z*) showing an angel troubling the water. This shows that at a very early time this was believed to represent the site of the pool referred to in the New Testament (*Pal. Expl. Fund. Quarterly Statement*, 1888, pp. 115-34; 1890, pp. 18-20). Williams (*Holy City*, p. 484) and Clermont-Ganneau had before this discovery indicated this as the spot near which the pool should be found. The choice probably lies between the last-named site near St. Anne's and the Fountain of the Virgin, with the probabilities somewhat in favor of the former.

¶ 112. Notes on § 45, Mark 2 : 23-28.—Vs. 23, "corn-fields": better, "fields of grain," probably of wheat. This would make the month May or June. Paths frequently run through grain-fields in Palestine. "Pluck the ears of corn": better, "pull the heads of grain." Vs. 24, "that which is not lawful": According to the scrupulous Pharisees the disciples of Jesus had broken the sabbath, in that they had reaped, threshed, and winnowed by pulling, rubbing, and cleaning the grain before eating it. This attitude of the Pharisees is in keeping with the regulations governing action upon the sabbath which have come down to us in the Talmud. Vs. 25, "what David did": see 1 Sam. 21 : 1 f. Vs. 26, "house of God": the tabernacle, as the temple was not built until the time of Solomon. "When Abiathar was high priest": According to 1 Sam. 21 : 2 Ahimelech was high priest when David ate the shewbread, Abiathar being made high priest shortly afterward (1 Sam. 23 : 9), but the discrepancy is of no consequence to the argument of Jesus. "Shewbread": the sacred bread set before Jehovah in two rows of six loaves on a table in the holy place of the tabernacle. At the end of a week these loaves were eaten by the priests, after new ones had been set in their place. David was not a priest, and had no right

to eat the bread ; but his great need excused him. Vs. 27. This anecdote is used by Jesus to illustrate the principle governing the observance of a day of rest and worship ; it must aid, and not burden, men physically and religiously. Man is superior to the sabbath. Vs. 28, "so that," etc. : If this be true of the relation of men in general to the sabbath, Jesus holds that it is preëminently true of himself. He claims to be superior even to the divine law as it was published by Moses.

¶ 113. **Notes on § 45, Matt. 12 : 1-8.**—Vs. 5, "Have ye not read," etc. : The reference (Numb., chaps. 28, 29) is to the work done by the priests in making the sabbath burnt-offering of two lambs. The needs of the temple worship justified breaking the law of the sabbath. Vs. 6, "one greater than the temple" : better, "something greater," etc., *i. e.*, the kingdom of God. All the more, therefore, was he, its founder, superior to the law governing sabbath observance. Vs. 7, "If ye had known" : fully understood. The rest of this important verse is a rebuke to a narrow conscientiousness that would rather see a human being suffer than break a rule to aid him. Jesus maintains that God desires the spirit of love and mercy rather than any formal obedience, such as sacrifice (Hos. 6 : 6 ; *cf.* Mic. 6 : 6-8).

¶ 114. **Notes on § 46, Mark 3 : 1-6.**—Vs. 1, "hand withered" : doubtless as the effect of an accident. Vs. 2, "they watched him" : Evidently the conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees (vs. 8) has greatly deepened since the query as to fasting. "That they might accuse him" : According to the Pharisees it was not lawful to render any unnecessary medical assistance upon the sabbath. If, therefore, the sick person — as in the present instance — could be cured as well on some other day as on the sabbath, they believed it a sin to heal him on the sabbath (*cf.* ¶ 110). Vs. 3, "stand forth" : The obedience of the man is the first evidence we have of his faith. Vs. 4, "Is it lawful on the sabbath day," etc. : The question of Jesus discloses a fundamental truth : "not to do good to a person needing it is the same as to do him evil" (Gould). The alternative he thus presents them is not between doing nothing and doing something on the sabbath, but between doing something good and (by refusal to do anything) doing something bad. No wonder they did not want to answer him. Vs. 5, "looked round about . . . with anger, being grieved" : Such hardening of heart (hearts growing harder) and moral cowardice, such an elevation of a religious rule above actual human need, could not fail to arouse righteous indignation in Jesus ; but it also caused him grief — a fact well worthy of thought. Vs. 6, "Herodians" : mentioned only by Mark. They were those who



avored the rule of the Herodian family. Such persons would ordinarily be suspected by the Pharisees, the old enemies and victims of Herod I. Should Jesus continue to gain popularity, there was danger that what seemed the religious and political foundations of society would be shaken.

¶ 115. **The Order of Events in Mark 2:13—3:6.**—"The sequence of incidents in Mark (at this point) suggests that we have here rather a typical group of points in the controversy with the Pharisees than a chronicle of events as they happened in order of time" (SANDAY, in *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*, II, 613). The general subject is the relation of Jesus to the Pharisees and their teachings. Internal evidence seems to demand that considerable time should have elapsed between the calm questioning of Jesus as to publicans and fasting, and the determination to kill him because of his attitude toward the sabbath laws. The reasons for this view are (*a*) the evident unity of the section, (*b*) the absence of any chronological interdependence of the episodes, (*c*) the apparent friendship in which Jesus lived with leading Jews later in the Galilean period (*cf.* Luke 7:3), (*d*) the less advanced stage of the conflict with the scribes and Pharisees (Mark 3:22 f.; Matt. 12:38 f.; Mark 7:1 f.) at a later time, and (*e*) the utter absence of any evidence that the Pharisees interfered seriously with Jesus until a considerable time later. We are led to believe, therefore, that § 43 belongs to the very beginning of Jesus' ministry, § 45 a little later; § 46, on the other hand, may belong to the time just before the withdrawal of Jesus to the north, of which act the plot of the Pharisees was very likely one cause. It may be noticed, also, that Papias in the earliest known reference to Mark's gospel says it was not "in order," though correct.

¶ 116. **The Causes of the Enmity of the Scribes and Pharisees.**—At the beginning of the public work of Jesus the religious leaders of his people paid him little attention, and he was allowed to work in peace. Their conflict with him passed rapidly through the stages of surprise, suspicion, open criticism, and conspiracy. Its fundamental ground was the attitude of Jesus toward the "oral law," or teaching of the Pharisees as a class, especially as it concerned the sabbath. Jesus did nothing to placate the rabbis, but on the contrary attacked them with increasing severity as hypocrites. Added to this essentially religious conflict was the popularity of Jesus among the masses, which was interpreted to mean social agitation, if not revolution. Altogether it was a continuation of the long struggle of the prophets with priests and legalists.

¶ 117. **The Characteristics and Results of the First Period of the Galilean Ministry.**—The new beginning made by Jesus in Galilee had involved at first only his unaided preaching that the kingdom of God was at hand. But almost immediately he set about establishing that kingdom in the shape of a fraternity composed of his disciples. He, therefore, recalled the little group

of friends who had been with him in Judea, and began his short life with them. Gradually their numbers grew. His wonderful cures, his sympathy with the despised masses, his authoritative teaching, his sense of personal superiority to the laws of the Pharisees, all drew men to him, and the movement thus begun soon attracted the attention, if not the suspicion, of the authorities in Jerusalem. Especially did his treatment of Pharisaic teaching about the sabbath, to the effect that it is inferior to the law of human need, displease the religious authorities. Yet (even if §46 be regarded as belonging to this period) they did not openly attack him, and he continued to teach in the synagogues of Galilee so long as they could contain the crowds that wished to hear him. When his popularity made this no longer possible, he preached in the fields or on the beach near Capernaum. The characteristics of the period may thus be summed up in the words: evangelization and beginnings of organization; popularity and beginnings of opposition. It was these conditions that made it necessary to select the twelve men who formed his closest companions.

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¶ 118. **Questions and Suggestions for Study.**—(1)\* Describe the healing of the paralytic. (2) What is the most remarkable thing in the entire account? (3) Why were the scribes displeased with Jesus? Could they have understood him as well as we? (4)\* What does Jesus do to prove his authority to forgive sins? (5) Do we need miracles today to prove that God is willing to forgive anyone who wants him to forgive him? (6)\* What makes us think the paralytic had faith that Jesus could heal him? (7) Can anyone show faith of a higher sort in the same way?

(8)\* Who were the publicans, and why were they hated? (9)\* What do we know about Matthew-Levi? (10)\* Who were the scribes? (11)\* Who were the Pharisees? See ¶ 30, *b*. (12) Show how Jesus "called sinners to repentance."

(13) What is meant by fasting? (14)\* Why did not Jesus expect his disciples to fast? (15) Does he command us to fast? (16) How should religious people live, mournfully or joyfully? Why? (17) State briefly the difference between Jesus and John the Baptist in this matter.

(18)\* What did the sick man believe about the Pool of Bethesda? (19)\* How did Jesus violate the Pharisees' law about the sabbath in healing this man? (20)\* How did the

man show his faith in Jesus? (21) What did Jesus mean by calling God his Father? (22)\* To what testimony does Jesus appeal in his argument with the Jews?

(23)\* How did the disciples violate the sabbath law while walking in the fields? (24)\* What defense did Jesus make for them? (25)\* What illustrations does he draw from the Old Testament? (26)\* What is the true law of the sabbath?

(27)\* What rule of the Pharisees did Jesus break when he healed the man with the withered hand? (28)\* What question does he ask in defense of his action? (29) Why were the Pharisees eager to kill him? (30) Are very conscientious people liable to be too severe in their judgments? If so, how can they overcome this danger?

(31)\* Give briefly the results of the first period of the Galilean ministry?

¶ 119. **Constructive Work.**—Let the pupil write a chapter for his “Life of Christ” on some such plan as this:

#### CHAPTER X.

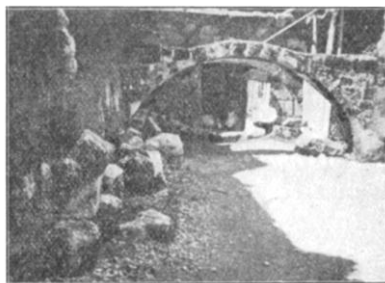
##### THE HOSTILITY OF THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES TO JESUS.

1. The forgiveness of sins and the rejection of fasting.
2. The growth of the sabbath controversy.

##### ¶ 120. **Supplementary Topics for Study.**

1. Fasting as described (*a*) in the Old Testament; (*b*) in the New Testament.
2. Pharisaic laws governing the observance of the sabbath.

EDERSHEIM, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, II, 53-61; SCHÜRER, *The Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ*, Div. II, Vol. ii, 96-105. See also Dictionaries of the Bible under “Sabbath.”



RUINS OF OLD CHURCH OVER POOL OF BETHESDA

## PART V.

## SECOND PERIOD OF THE GALILEAN MINISTRY.

FROM THE CHOOSING OF THE TWELVE UNTIL THE WITHDRAWAL INTO  
NORTHERN GALILEE.

## CHAPTER XI.

THE CHOOSING OF THE TWELVE AND THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

## § 47. The widespread fame of Christ.

Matt. 4 : 23-25.

or

Matt. 12 : 15-21.

Mark 3 : 7-12.

[Luke 6 : 17-19.]

## § 48. The choosing of the Twelve.

[Matt. 10 : 2-4.]

Mark 3 : 13-19a.

Luke 6 : 12-19.

## § 49. The Sermon on the Mount.

Matt. chaps. 5, 6, 7 [8 : 1].

Luke 6 : 20-49.

¶ 121. Notes on § 47, Mark 3 : 7-12.— These verses indicate how widely at this period the work of Jesus had attracted attention. Vs. 7, “with the disciples”: see also vs. 9; though the Twelve had not yet been chosen, Jesus had a company of disciples, pupils who accompanied him from place to place. Among these were the four fishermen (Mark 1 : 16-20) and Levi the publican (Mark 2 : 13-16). “The sea”: of Galilee. “Galilee” . . . . “Judea” . . . . “Jerusalem” . . . . “beyond Jordan” . . . . “Tyre and Sidon”: look up all these on the map, and notice that they include all Palestine (except Samaria) and the adjacent regions both south and north. Vs. 11, “whenever they beheld him,” etc.: this is one of the strange facts about the demons, always mentioned except in cases where the demoniac was dumb or at a distance. See ¶ 101.

¶ 122. Notes on § 47, Matt. 4 : 23-25; 12 : 15-21.— The bringing together of these two passages from Matthew (4 : 23-25; 12 : 15-21) is required by the comparison of the gospels, which indicates that both refer to the same period. Matthew’s order is due, no doubt, to his topical arrangement. See ¶ 11.

Matt. 4 : 23, “all Syria”: corresponding to Mark’s Tyre and Sidon, for which it is probably a hyperbole. Vs. 25, “Decapolis”: a name applied to the region in which were located ten Greek cities, which had been established in the days since Alexander’s conquest and which had recently formed a league. The cities included Gadara, Gerasa, Philadelphia, Scythopolis, and others, all but Scythopolis, the capital of the confederation, lying east of the Jordan.

On Matt. 12:17 see ¶ 39.

Luke 6:17-19 is closely parallel to Mark 3:7-12, and, though placed after the choosing of the Twelve, instead of before it as in Mark, evidently refers to the same facts.

¶ 123. **Notes on § 48, Mark 3:13-19a.**—Vs. 13, “into the mountain”: better, perhaps, “on the hills,” *i. e.*, the hills that skirted the sea. Tradition makes the Horns of Hattin, a double-peaked hill four miles back from the sea and about eight miles southwest from Capernaum, the site; but the gospel furnishes no means of deciding certainly. “Calleth unto him whom he himself would”: he made his own selection of those to whom he would speak that day, and from whom he would choose the still smaller circle of the Twelve. This was something different from his usual sermons addressed to all who chose to come. See Luke’s vs. 12. Vs. 14, “and he appointed twelve, that they might be with him,” etc.: a most instructive statement of the purpose for which the Twelve were chosen: they are to be his companions and (for he was recognized as a teacher) his pupils, constituting a fraternity, the nucleus of the kingdom; he is to send them out from time to time to preach, and to cast out demons. Thus they are to be both pupils and workers, combining learning and doing. The sending out (the Greek shows this as the English cannot) is not a single act, that which is to follow his death—of this they have as yet no knowledge or thought—but something to be repeatedly done while they are with him. Vs. 15, “devils”: see the margin “demons;” the gospels speak of but one devil, Satan: but of many demons, unclean spirits. Vss. 16-19. Compare the lists in Matt. 10:2-4; Luke 6:12-19; Acts 1:13. Observe that the names in each list fall into three groups of four each; these groups are the same in all the lists and stand in the same order; only the order within the groups varies. The four fishermen always constitute the first group, Peter always leading. The second group begins with Philip, the third with James. The student should fix these names in mind.

¶ 124. **Notes on § 48, Luke 6:12-19.**—Vs. 12, “continued all night in prayer”: an important addition of Luke, which emphasizes the significance which Jesus attached to this event, and his consciousness of need of special divine guidance in times of special responsibility. Vs. 13, “whom he also named apostles”: *i. e.*, “messengers, delegates.” On vss. 17-19 see ¶ 122.

¶ 125. **Notes on § 49, Matt., chaps. 5, 6, 7 [8:1].**—In the study of this discourse it is desirable to get at the outset an impression of it

as a whole. The student is therefore advised to go carefully over the whole sermon, endeavoring, with the help of the following analysis, to get a clear idea of its general plan.

## ANALYSIS OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

Matt., chaps. 5-7.

- I. THE CITIZENS OF THE KINGDOM (THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) DESCRIBED ACCORDING TO HIS IDEAL OF THEIR CHARACTER. 5 : 3-16
  1. The moral character which Jesus desired in those of whom he would build his kingdom. 5 : 3-12
  2. Their office in the world. 5 : 13-16
- II. THE PERMANENCE OF THE LAW, AND THE HIGH STANDARD OF RIGHTEOUSNESS IN THE KINGDOM. 5 : 17-20
- III. THE RIGHTEOUSNESS THAT IS REQUIRED IN THE NEW KINGDOM IN CONTRAST WITH THE PREVALENT TEACHINGS OF THE SYNAGOGUE. EVIL THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS, AND ALL DEGREES OF SIN, CONDEMNED, IN CONTRAST WITH THE LITERALISM OF THE SYNAGOGUE, WHICH CONDEMNED ONLY THE DEEDS SPECIFICALLY PROHIBITED BY THE LAW. 5 : 21-48
  1. In respect to murder. 5 : 21-26
  2. In respect to adultery. 5 : 27-30
  3. In respect to divorce. 5 : 31, 32
  4. In respect to oaths. 5 : 33-37
  5. In respect to retaliation and resistance. 5 : 38-42
  6. In respect to love of others. 5 : 43-47
  7. The all-inclusive precept of righteousness. 5 : 48
- IV. THE RIGHTEOUSNESS REQUIRED IN THE NEW KINGDOM IN CONTRAST WITH THE OSTENTATIOUS AND HYPOCRITICAL CONDUCT OF THE MEN OF THAT DAY. ALL THINGS TO BE DONE FOR THE APPROVAL, NOT OF MEN, BUT OF GOD. 6 : 1-18
  1. General injunction to avoid ostentation. 6 : 1
  2. Applied to almsgiving. 6 : 2-4
  3. Applied to prayer. 6 : 5-15
  4. Applied to fasting. 6 : 16-18
- V. SINGLE-EYED SERVICE OF GOD AND SIMPLE TRUST IN HIM ENJOINED. 6 : 19-34
- VI. JUDGMENT OF OTHERS FORBIDDEN. 7 : 1-6

- VII. CONFIDENCE IN GOD'S WILLINGNESS TO BLESS ENJOINED. 7:7-11
- VIII. THE ALL-INCLUSIVE PRINCIPLE RESPECTING CONDUCT TOWARD OTHERS (THE "GOLDEN RULE"). 7:12
- IX. THE PRACTICE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, NOT PROFESSION OR HEARING ONLY, ENJOINED. 7:13-27
1. Diligence to enter upon the right way enjoined. 7:13, 14
  2. Warning against false prophets. 7:15-20
  3. Warning against self-deception and confidence in mere profession. 7:21-27

Notice the prominence throughout the discourse of two great ideas, the *kingdom of heaven* and *righteousness*. The theme of the discourse, indeed, is the righteousness of the kingdom, the character of those who are to compose and to enjoy the new kingdom that John and Jesus had announced. Almost every paragraph of the discourse deals with some aspect of this one subject.

5:1, 2, narrative introduction. Vs. 1, "into the mountain": see on Mark 3:13 ¶ 123. "His disciples": it is these to whom the discourse is addressed and who are spoken to in the second person (vs. 13, etc.). The gospel speaks also of multitudes as being present (7:28, 29), but it was not *to them* that Jesus spoke.

I, 1. *The moral character which Jesus desired in those of whom he would build his kingdom*, 5:3-12.—Vs. 3, "poor in spirit": conscious that they are poor, and so conscious of need, not, as the Pharisees, self-sufficient. See an illustration in Luke 18:9-14. "Theirs is the kingdom": to them belong its privileges and blessings. In the following verses the clause beginning with "for" expresses in each case some phase of this same idea, some blessing of the kingdom, appropriate to the element of character set forth in the first clause. Vs. 4, "they that mourn": to whom their own need, and perhaps too the needs of the times, are a grief; not, as many, self-satisfied or indifferent. Vs. 5, "the meek": the gentle and teachable, not the violent and self-asserting, harsh and intractable. Compare Ps. 24:10; James 1:21; and especially Matt. 11:29. Vs. 6, "hunger and thirst after righteousness": eagerly and constantly desire to have that character which God desires and approves. Vs. 7, "the merciful": compare Mark 12:40; Matt. 23:23. Vs. 8, "the pure in heart": not simply as the Pharisees, who sought to be outwardly fair and ceremonially pure. Compare Mark 7:2-5, 17-23; Matt. 23:25-28. Vs. 11, "when men shall reproach you": compare John 5:44; 12:43; 15:19, 20. Notice that

Jesus is not here speaking of several classes of people, but of one class, setting forth the various elements of character which he desired in those who were to be his disciples. Consider carefully what is the character which is thus described.

I, 2. *The office of Jesus' disciples in the world, 5: 13-16.*—Vs. 13, "the salt of the earth": the purifying, antiseptic influence in the world; the people who by their presence and influence are to keep the world from becoming utterly corrupt. "But if the salt have lost its savour": *i. e.*, the real saltness (this was possible to the ancient salt as it is not to the purer article today); applied to the disciples it denotes the loss of inmost character, while still retaining the name or appearance of discipleship and goodness. "Cast out," etc.: scorned, despised. This is all that hypocrites, nominal Christians, are fit for. Vs. 14, "the light of the world": the source of moral enlightenment, those who by their lives show men what true and right living is. "A city set on a hill cannot be hid": you cannot therefore shirk the responsibility. Vs. 16, "Even so": *i. e.*, as a city on a hill or a lamp on a stand shines, naturally and necessarily, because it is lighted. Both illustrations, the salt and the light, emphasize the influence of *character*, what men *are* rather than what they seek to *do*. "And glorify your Father": this is always the effect of a good life. Men believe in the goodness of God when they see goodness in men. Consider carefully the twofold responsibility Jesus lays upon his disciples, and the way in which it is to be met.

II. *The permanence of the law and the high standard of righteousness in the kingdom, 5: 17-20.*—Vs. 17, "Think not," etc.: Evidently some had charged Jesus with breaking down the authority of the law and perverting morals. The ground of this charge was doubtless in the fact that he associated with men who did not keep the law (Mark 2: 16), allowed his disciples to disregard the fasts (Mark 2: 18), and perhaps most of all because he did not keep the sabbath as the scribes taught that the law required it to be kept (Mark 2: 23—3: 6; John 5: 16-18). Thus, as so many others have done, they identified their interpretation of the scripture with the scripture and divine law itself, and because he opposed the interpretation they charged him with hostility to the scriptures. "The law or the prophets": the scriptures which we call the Old Testament. But it is evidently the moral teachings of both law and prophets that Jesus is speaking of, not the predictions. "I came, not to destroy, but to fulfil": Jesus denies the charges against him, and declares his devotion to the law, and (vss. 18, 19) its permanence



in the new kingdom. This Jesus could do, although he disregarded or disapproved certain statutes of the law (for example respecting fasting, Mark 2:19, 20; clean and unclean meats, Mark 7:17-19, and divorce, Matt. 19:7-9), because he identified the law with its great principle of love (Matt. 7:12; 22:37-40). This was to him *the law and the prophets*, and individual statutes were of value and of permanent authority only in so far as they embodied and expressed this central principle. This was just the opposite position from that which the Pharisees took. They gave all heed to the statutes as authoritative in themselves, and lost sight of the principles. Hence the conflict between them and Jesus. Vs. 20, "For except your righteousness," etc.: a proof of his statement in vs. 17. So far from destroying the law, as the Pharisees charged, he demanded a righteousness so much higher than theirs that no one whose morality was not superior to that of the Pharisees could have part in the kingdom. The verses that follow show that the superiority of the righteousness which he sought was not in the doing of more things, in the keeping of more rules, than the Pharisees, but in its being a matter of heart, not of outward deed only.

III. *The righteousness of the kingdom in contrast with prevalent teachings of the synagogue*, 5:21-48.—In these paragraphs Jesus gives several illustrations of his statement in vs. 20. The connection with that verse, and the use of the phrase "Ye have heard," which indicates that he is speaking of the teaching to which his hearers have been accustomed to listen (in the synagogue), not to what they have read, shows that Jesus is contrasting his teaching, not with that of the Old Testament, but with that of the synagogue teachers—the scribes of the Pharisees. The people of his day sat at the feet of these scribes, and knew even Moses only as the scribes interpreted him. It is against their teachings that Jesus directs his criticism. Only he is not careful to avoid criticising even the law if, in order to correct the erroneous teachings of the scribes, he must also correct Moses. He had within himself a standard higher than scribe or prophet or lawgiver. And this fact gives all the greater weight to his approval of the core of the Old Testament.

5:21-26. Vs. 26, "the judgment": not the final judgment, but the action of the local court. Since such a court could deal only with actual murder, the teaching of the scribes tended to direct attention solely to the outward act. Jesus goes below the act to the state of heart, and condemns anger and contempt more strongly than the scribes had condemned murder itself. Vs. 24, "leave there thy gift,"

etc.: no act of worship can be acceptable to God while there is in the heart hatred to a brother, which leaves unrighted a wrong done to him. Vss. 25, 26 are best understood in their connection in Luke 12:58, 59.

5:27-30. See Exod. 20:14. Substantially the same principle which is above applied to murder and hatred is now applied to adultery and covetousness of another's wife (by implication also to all unlawful desire): not the act only, but the cherishing of unlawful desire is wrong.

5:31, 32. See Deut. 24:1-4. In like manner in the matter of a husband retaining or putting away a wife who has become distasteful to him, Jesus puts the principle of love which will, if needful, endure and be patient and longsuffering (1 Cor. 13:7) in the place of literal conformity to the statute.

5:33-37. The Old Testament permitted the confirmation of one's promise with an oath, and only forbade one, having made such a promise, to break it (see Lev. 19:12; Numb. 30:2). The object of the statute was to secure fidelity to one's promises. But the Pharisees, by their casuistry, especially by laying emphasis on the reference to Jehovah as that which made the oath binding (see vss. 33-36 and compare Matt. 23:16-22), had perverted it into an expedient by which to escape from keeping a promise. Jesus, finding this mischievous practice in vogue, sweeps the whole system away, bidding men stop swearing, make simple affirmations, and abide by these.

5:38-42. There are two classes of passages in the Old Testament, those which permit or encourage retaliation (see Exod. 21:23, 25; Deut. 19:18-21; 23:5, 6; 25:17-19) and those which forbid it (Exod. 23:4, 5; Lev. 19:18, 19, 33-35). Jesus implies that in the current teaching of the time the former was (often, if not constantly) emphasized. In direct opposition to this type of teaching, he bids his disciples suffer wrong rather than do it, and to overcome evil with good.

5:43-47. Against the injunction of the scribes which limited to one's neighbor the duty of love, and encouraged the hatred of one's enemies (see Lev. 19:18, 19; Prov. 15:1; 20:22; 24:28, 29; but also Deut. 23:5, 6; 25:17-19; Ps. 109), Jesus enjoins love even of those who are doing us harm, bidding his disciples take their Father in heaven as their pattern in these matters. Herein Jesus gives the central principle of all his teaching concerning conduct toward others: we are to love our fellow-men as God loves men, both the just and the

unjust. This love is, of course, not approval, but desire for their well-being such as leads us to seek to help them and do them good.

5:48, "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect": an injunction which sums up all the teaching of this section (vss. 21-47) and is to be taken in its obvious meaning without abatement or qualification. See on 7:12.

6:1-18. In these verses the righteousness required in the new kingdom is contrasted with the ostentatious and hypocritical *conduct* of the Pharisees, as in 5:21-48 it had been compared with the *teachings* of the scribes. Jesus is still expounding the thought of 5:20. Vs. 1, "righteousness": good conduct, right deeds. This verse expresses the general principle of which the following verses give three illustrations, alms, fasting, and prayer, which, there is reason to believe, were regarded by the Jews as the chief elements of religion. Except for the addition of special matter about prayer (vss. 7-15), each of these three examples is dealt with in exactly parallel language (almsgiving, 2-4; prayer, 5, 6; fasting, 16-18), the teaching in each case being that the righteous act should not be done ostentatiously, but secretly as in the presence of God. The special injunctions concerning prayer added in vss. 7-15 guard against an error to which the Gentiles (rather than the Pharisees) are prone, give an outline of prayer, teaching for what and in what spirit we ought to pray, and warn against an unforgiving spirit, which makes true prayer impossible.

V. *Single-eyed service of God and simple trust in him enjoined*, 6:19-34.—In this paragraph the contrast with Pharisaism is no longer present. The central thought is that Jesus' disciples, the members of the kingdom, ought not to be seeking to pile up earthly and material treasures, but, trusting God to care for them and provide for their wants, should devote themselves to the interests of his kingdom. Thus they will live, not a selfish life, seeking their own interests, nor a divided life, devoting half their energy to serving God and half to accumulating for themselves, nor an anxious life, worrying lest they shall not be provided for, but with one purpose will serve God and his kingdom.

VI. *Judgment of others forbidden*, 7:1-6.—The error against which these verses warn the disciples is one of which the Pharisees were conspicuously guilty. The one principle of love in which Jesus sums up all duty to our fellow-men is the corrective of this fault also. See on 7:12.

VII. *Confidence in God's willingness to bless*, 7:7-11.—The thought of this paragraph is akin on one side to that of 6:7-13, especially vs. 8,

and on the other to that of 6:19-34. It teaches trust in God and expression of it in prayer. Like the passages just named it is found in Luke in a different connection. See Luke, chaps. 11, 12.

VIII. "*The Golden Rule*," 7:12.—"All things, therefore, whatsoever ye would that men should do to you," etc.: In this principle Jesus sums up all the teaching of this sermon, so far as the conduct of men to one another is concerned. In the light of this great principle all specific injunctions are to be understood. Some have undertaken to apply such sayings as, "Resist not him that is evil," and, "Give to him that askest of thee," literally as fixed rules. But this is utterly to misinterpret Jesus. This whole discourse is a criticism of the Pharisees for making morality consist in a literal keeping of the rules of the Old Testament. It is impossible to suppose that it simply imposes a new set of rules. Others, feeling that a literal obedience to these rules is impossible, if not also harmful, give up all attempt to obey the teachings of this discourse. Both are wrong. In this verse, and in such other verses as 5:44, we find the *principle*, which we ought always to strive to follow. The single precepts are intended to correct the selfishness and narrowness that Jesus saw about him, and to point out some of the many ways in which the principle may be applied. They, too, are to be obeyed, always in spirit, and in letter when such an obedience is consistent with the principle. If a man would follow Jesus, he must not resist an enemy in a spirit of revenge; nor should he refuse to give to a beggar from a selfish motive. If he resist or withhold, he must do so because love, regard for the highest well-being of society in general, requires it. "For this is the law and the prophets": In this one principle is summed up all that the Old Testament teaches concerning man's duty to man. Whatever else there is in the Old Testament is either application of this, or the fault and defect which belong to it because God's revelation was made through and to imperfect men.

IX. *The practice of righteousness, not profession or hearing only, enjoined*, 7:13-27.—These closing paragraphs emphasize the seriousness of the task which Jesus is laying upon his disciples. Righteousness is not attained without effort (vss. 13, 14). They must be on their guard against false teachers who would lead them astray, but these can be detected by their lives (vss. 15-20). And finally the disciples are warned against a common error of the Pharisees, fancying that mere profession would meet God's requirements. It is not *hearing* Jesus' teaching, it is not *saying* "Lord, Lord," that meets the demand of the

kingdom; it is *doing* what he teaches. Only he who does this is really building on the rock (vss. 21-27). Thus the sermon ends, as it began, with an insistence on the high standard of morality in the kingdom. And this morality is one both of heart and of life, of principle and of practice.

¶ 126. **Notes on § 49, Luke 6: 20-49.**—This discourse reported by Luke differs from the one just studied in Matthew only in its omission of a large part of what is given in Matthew. The order of topics common to the two is almost identical.

Vss. 20-22. Compare Matt. 5: 4-12. Vs. 20, "blessed are ye poor": Luke emphasizes the actual poverty of those to whom Jesus spoke, Matthew the effect of it in the consciousness of need. The worst thing about riches is that they give men a sense of self-sufficiency. See Matt. 19: 23, 24; Mark 10: 23-25. Vs. 21, "ye that hunger now": it is physical hunger which is primarily meant, yet not as a blessing in itself, but as helping to create the desire for the best things. Compare Matt. 5: 6. Just how these different reports of Jesus' words arose it is impossible to say. But they probably represent two sides of his real thought.

Vss. 24-26. No parallel in Matthew. These are the correlatives of the beatitudes. On vs. 24 compare Mark 10: 23-25; on vs. 25 compare Luke 16: 19-31; on vs. 26 compare Matt. 23: 5-8.

Vss. 27-36. In these verses Luke gives the same teachings which are in Matt. 5: 38-48, only omitting all comparison with the current teachings of the synagogue, as if writing for Gentiles only. Vs. 31 contains the golden rule, which in Matthew stands much later, in 7: 12. Vs. 36 has "merciful" instead of "perfect" (Matt. 5: 48), thus emphasizing the particular element of character which the preceding verses have spoken of.

Vss. 37-42. Compare Matt. 7: 1-5. Luke's report is at this point fuller than Matthew's.

Vss. 43-45. Compare Matt. 7: 16-19. But the connection is different. In Matthew these words set forth the test by which false teachers can be distinguished from the true. Here they enforce the warning against undertaking to judge one another. In Matt. 12: 33-35 they have still another connection and force.

Vss. 46-49. Compare Matt. 7: 21-27. Matthew and Luke end alike, as they began alike. We have here, in all probability, not two discourses, but two reports of one discourse, neither, however, complete, and the longer one at least containing some matter delivered on other occasions.

¶ 127. **Questions and Suggestions for Study.**—(1)\* In what regions had the fame of Jesus spread abroad at the time of the choosing of the Twelve? (2)\* Under what circumstances did he choose the twelve apostles? (3)\* For what did he choose them, and what did they become by his choice of them? (4)\* What facts indicate the importance which he attached to this act? (5)\* Name the apostles.

(6)\* To whom was the Sermon on the Mount addressed? (7) Can the statements of this discourse made in the second person be applied to others than Jesus' disciples? (8)\* What is the theme of this discourse, as given in Matthew? (9) In what marked respect (aside from length) does Luke's report in 6: 20-49 differ from Matthew's? (10) Name (and fix in mind) the nine main divisions of the discourse in Matthew. (11) In how many of these divisions is there a contrast expressed or implied between the righteousness of the kingdom and that of the Pharisees? (12)\* What kind of persons did Jesus desire as the material out of which to build his kingdom (Matt. 5: 3-12)? (13)\* What great responsibility did Jesus lay upon his disciples (5: 13-16)? (14)\* What led the Pharisees to look upon Jesus as hostile to the law and a perverter of morals? (15) What was it that Jesus really opposed? (16)\* What was his real attitude to the law? (17) Against what are Jesus' criticisms in Matt. 5: 21-48 primarily directed? (18)\* What is the one positive and all-inclusive principle which he teaches in place of all rules of conduct? (19) Against what is the criticism in 6: 1-18 directed? (20) What positive principle is here taught? (21) Against what vice of Pharisaism is 7: 13-27 directed? (22) In what form does that vice appear today? (23)\* Putting together the teaching of 5: 21-48; 7: 12; and 7: 13-27, what kind of morality does Jesus require of his disciples? (24) What are the chief differences between Luke's report of this discourse and Matthew's? (25)\* Ought the teachings of Jesus in this discourse to be obeyed? (26) Are they generally obeyed? (27) Can they be obeyed in a selfish, self-sufficient spirit? See Matt. 5: 3, 4, 5.

¶ 128. **Constructive Work.**—Write chap. xi of your “Life of Christ” (inserting the title of Part V). The following outline is suggested :

1. The situation at the opening of this period ; the success thus far attained ; the attitude of the various classes toward Jesus.
2. The choosing of the Twelve ; the men ; their work ; the significance of the act.
3. The Sermon on the Mount ; the place ; the occasion of the discourse ; the persons addressed ; the theme ; the main divisions ; the central teachings ; is it to be obeyed ?

¶ 129. **Supplementary Topics for Study.**

1. The successive calls of the four fishermen.
2. What the disciples knew and believed about Jesus when they were chosen to be apostles.
3. The relation of the choice of the Twelve to the organization of the kingdom of God.
4. The relation between the work for which the apostles were first appointed and that which fell to them after the death and resurrection of Jesus.
5. Jesus’ attitude towards Pharisaism.
6. Jesus’ attitude toward the Old Testament, (*a*) its central moral principles, (*b*) its specific statutes on moral and ceremonial matters.
7. The authority of Jesus : subject to or superior to that of the Old Testament ?
8. Can the ethical teachings of Jesus be practically applied today ?